

## **Royce-Engel – Legislation to Arm the Kurds**

### *Section-By-Section*

**Summary:** This bill provides temporary authority to directly provide U.S. weapons to the Iraqi Kurdish “Peshmerga” fighting against terrorists from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The bill maintains existing congressional oversight over such arms transfers, and includes safeguards against the diversion of U.S. weapons outside the Kurdistan Regional Government. The bill expires after three years, in recognition of the emergency nature of this authority.

**Section 1. Findings.** This section includes Congressional findings, including that:

- The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is the democratically elected government of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq, and Iraqi Kurds have been a reliable and stable partner of the United States; and
- The Peshmerga forces lack the arms and battle-ready armored-vehicles necessary to take significant offensive action against ISIL forces, leading to their requests for such assistance.

**Section 2. Sense of Congress.** This section includes several sense of the Congress statements, including that the people of Kurdistan face an urgent and deadly threat from ISIL which the Iraqi Security Forces, of which the Peshmerga are a component, are currently unable to match in arms.

**Section 3. Statement of Policy.** This section establishes that it shall be the policy of the U.S. to provide direct military assistance to the Kurdistan Regional Government to counter ISIL.

**Section 4. Temporary Emergency Authorization of Defense Articles, Defense Services, and Related Training Directly to the Kurdistan Regional Government.** This section authorizes the President to provide weapons and license commercial defense exports directly to the KRG for the purpose of supporting international coalition efforts against ISIL or any successor group.

- It states that the President should consult with the Government of Iraq in carrying out this assistance, as well as provide prior notice of assistance to be provided to the KRG.
- It preserves Congressional oversight over arms sales to the KRG, and establishes a related reporting requirement to the appropriate congressional committees on the nature and timeline of U.S. defense articles to be supplied to the KRG.
- The authority to provide U.S. weapons directly to the KRG would expire three years after the date of enactment of this bill.